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SERVICE

USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

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HORIZON 1980

CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

What's Ahead? Researchers at the U. S. Department of Agriculture predict that Mrs. Consumer will have more money to spend in 1980--perhaps even 50 percent more than she does now. Population growth will have an impact on the labor force as well as on consumer purchases of foods and other goods, according to the economists. The family appetite for beef and veal should continue to increase for the next ten years or so. And housewives will be reading the recipe books for new ways to prepare chicken and turkey...because of the relatively low prices for poultry, the USDA reports.

SEPTEMBER HAPPENINGS

National Better Breakfast Month. A bird-size breakfast is just for birds. If you're a human...you'd better not try it. Good nutrition starts with breakfast, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture nutritionists. One-fourth of the day's food should be eaten at breakfast. A basic breakfast plan of fruit, cereal or bread (or both), milk, and/or eggs, can be varied by using a different form of fruit, or by adding meat. September 1-30 will mark National Better Breakfast Month--an awareness of better nutrition starts at home.

HOME SWEET HOME LOOKS SWEETER

Rural Situation Brightens. Back-to-the-country living may now be possible for many who stayed in the city for lack of any other choice. The Farmers Home Administration in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, will be in a position to help more people than ever before. The newly enacted housing law no longer requires city dwellers who work in rural areas to own their own lots in the country before they are eligible for FHA loans to build homes. They will now be able to buy an existing home in a rural area with FHA help. Low income city dwellers (who work in rural localities) now may move directly from the city into FHA-financed rental or co-op units.



SPRING IS HERE, ALREADY

Gardeners, Take Note. Two new azalea varieties are expected to be ready for distribution in time for 1969 spring or fall planting, according to researchers at the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The "Mrs. LBJ" azalea was named in honor of Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson for her work in beautification. The evergreen plant, which grows three feet tall, has medium green leaves. It produces white flowers resembling a trumpet inside a trumpet and blooms in late May. The second evergreen azalea, named the "Ben Morrison," was developed to honor B. Y. Morrison, creator of the famed Glenn Dale azalea and the first director of the National Arboretum in Washington, D. C. The large rose and white single flowers bloom in clusters of two or three in middle to late May. Both varieties are hardy in southern New Jersey, Delaware, eastern Maryland, northern Virginia, and Tennessee.

AN OLD BORE FOR NEW HOMES

Old House Borers. An insect that can cause severe damage--most often in new buildings--but sometimes in older ones--is called the "old house borer." The adult beetles are usually found in the eastern United States and in Texas, Mississippi and Louisiana. They prefer pine and spruce woods, but may attack hemlock, true fir, or Douglas fir. It does not work in decayed wood. The larva bores through and feeds on wood. Serious infestations of this insect have occurred in the Atlantic coastal states. To learn about precautions to take and signs of infestation, the newly revised booklet "The Old House Borer," Leaflet No. 501 may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402--Price 5 cents.

THE CHERRY CROP...DROPS

Wonder Where the Cherries Are? The sweet cherry crop will be down 25 percent in 1968 in comparison with last year's output. The nation's top sweet cherry producing area--the northwest--was plagued by freezing weather throughout the spring. Oregon's crop will only be about a third of its normal output...Washington state will produce only half. On the brighter side--California is the only state that will have a good cherry crop. The California production is estimated to be two thirds above their 1967 production.

GROWING THINGS, GROWING MINDS

The Care and Feeding of a Tree. It was do-it-yourself in the fifties. Today it's grow-it-yourself in outdoor conservation laboratories established in a number of schools by U. S. Department of Agriculture technicians. The Department's Soil Conservation Specialists have given students in Michigan and Louisiana a chance to experiment with growing plants, watch the interplay of plant and animal life, and follow many other experimental projects in outdoor laboratories. In some areas, equipment is available for outdoor study in biology, physics and earth science. The first conservation education projects in District of Columbia Schools are now being established.

RECREATION USA

Dubbed a "Model Project." Mt. Rogers National Recreation area in southwestern Virginia is a 13,000 acre playground. Located in the Jefferson National Forest of Virginia, it is administered by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. It is near the tri-state junctions of Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina. Because of its centrally located populated region, eventually, the recreation area is expected to be within a day's drive of a third of the population of the United States. It will be a working forest in miniature as well as a playground. Hunting, timber harvesting and grazing will be allowed, although recreation will be given first consideration. The goal by the year 2000 is accommodation of 5 million visitors a year--initial step in USDA's development for reversing the flow of rural population to the over-crowded cities. Recreation areas benefit urban as well as rural people.

FOREST BEAR IS TV LION

"Smokey" Makes It Big. "Smokey Bear," top firefighter for state and federal forest services, will have his own weekly TV show. The animated color series will be shown on ABC-TV network every Saturday morning starting in September 1969. All fees collected from the license will be used to further the nationwide Forest Fire Prevention Campaign. A recent nationwide survey disclosed that Smokey's effectiveness in educating the public made him one of the most popular symbols in the nation.

NATURE TURNS NASTY

Hurricane Season Here. Do you know what the U. S. Department of Agriculture can do for you when natural disaster strikes? Tornadoes, earthquakes, floods rarely send advance warning. The USDA can provide emergency food to disaster victims from stocks already available in the states. Emergency loans may be extended to aid farmers whose property has been damaged or destroyed and the Rural Electrification Administration may make such loans to restore electric and telephone service in rural areas. Federal help can restore and conserve disaster stricken land and water resources. The USDA gives practical advice on repairs and on cleaning up after storm damage. During Hurricane Betsy in 1965, over 5½ million pounds of food was made available to help feed nearly 320,000 victims of the disaster. It was the largest emergency feeding in USDA's history.

YOU--The Consumer

How Do YOU Compare? Do you own a cotton summer dress? Is it your favorite fiber for summer dresses or would you prefer one of cotton-and-synthetic? How about blouses? Four out of five women interviewed on a U. S. Department of Agriculture nationwide survey owned blouses they had worn in the past year--do you? More than half the women interviewed expected to get three or more year's use out of a blouse. The nationwide survey is one of a series of studies conducted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Statistical Reporting Service.

PICK THE PLENTIFULS

September Best Buys. Peanuts and peanut products seem to go with the thoughts of "Back to school" days. Milk and dairy products, also on the plentiful list, go hand-in-hand with the breakfast and school lunch programs. For the weekends there is still plenty of time to consider outdoor barbecues. And what is more delectable than the aroma of barbecued chicken?

WHAT DOES MOTHER BUY?

One-Third of the Food Money. Where does it go? It puts the meat on the table. A report on the food buying habits of urban homemakers in three Alabama cities was recently released by the Auburn University Agricultural Experiment Station. Homemakers interviewed said they were interested in serving varied meat dishes. However, pork, beef, and poultry were the meats bought by most of the homemakers in the week prior to being interviewed. The pork purchases were high in this area because of the wide local use of bacon or sausage for breakfast. Three out of four consumers had purchased a broiler during the week preceding the interview and half usually served broilers once a week. Homemakers revealed they purchased broilers because the family liked them--broilers were an economical protein source--and they considered the price to be favorable. For prestige meals--celebrating birthdays, entertaining friends, etc.--chicken rated first, followed by a beef roast. And the Alabama survey disclosed that steak is still considered the number one man's favorite.

PLANTS BREATHE, TOO

Polluted Air and Your Garden. That sickly, white-speckled plant in your garden may be the victim of air pollution--especially if you live in or near a large metropolitan area. U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists have found that polluted air even in a typical greenhouse can cut the growth of very susceptible plants as much as 50 percent. The very sunlight that promotes plant growth reacts with auto exhausts, smoke, and other combustion products to form "photochemicals." Ozone, the most destructive pollutant of this type to plants, is likely to be at highest levels on clear summer days when, to the casual observer, air pollution levels seem low. A USDA research project is underway to develop resistant varieties of every major crop and ornamental plant. In the meantime, a number of popular home garden vegetables as well as ornamentals, grass varieties, and trees are known to be relatively resistant to photochemical air pollution. Scientists warn that the problems brought on by polluted air may someday affect gardens and farms throughout the country, not just those in or near urban areas.

SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write: Shirley E. Wagener, Editor of SERVICE, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Information, Special Reports Division, Washington, D. C. 20250. Please include your zipcode.